

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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S E C R E T VIENNA 8458

EXDIS

FROM US REP MBFR

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: NEED TO CIRCULATE NEW US DATA ON WARSAW PACT
FORCES

1. WE BELIEVE THAT ALLIED AND US PRESS BACKGROUNDING ON OPENING STATEMENTS, WHICH WILL PROBABLY TAKE PLACE ABOUT OCTOBER 31 OR NOVEMBER 1, WILL HAVE TO ENVISAGE USING SPECIFIC FIGURES FOR TOTAL NATO AND WARSAW PACT GROUND STRENGTH IN NGA, AND TOTAL US AND SOVIET GROUND STRENGTH IN NGA, PLUS TANK STRENGTHS, IN ORDER TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE DISPARITIES TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS. QUESTIONS FROM WESTERN PRESS CONCERNING RELATIVE FORCE STRENGTHS CAN BE EXPECTED. RELUCTANCE BY ALLIES TO PRESENT SPECIFIC FIGURES ON AT LEAST THOSE POINTS NOTED ABOVE COULD CREATE IMPRESSION OF LACK OF SERIOUSNESS ON PART OF ALLIES, MOST OF WHOM INCLUDING U.S. ARE EMPHASIZING TANK AND MANPOWER DISPARITIES IN THEIR OPENING STATEMENTS. USE ON THIS OCCASION OF OTHER THAN THE STANDARD DATA INTENDED FOR USE THROUGHOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS MAY RESULT IN DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN DATA ADVANCED BY VARIOUS ALLIES, WILL LEAD TO CONFUSION, AND COULD WEAKEN OUR CASE WITH EAST.

3. IT WAS CLEAR FROM DISCUSSION AT OCTOBER 12 AD HOC GROUP
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MEETING THAT ALLIES ARE ALREADY FEELING PRESSURE TO USE SOME FIGURES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE PRESS. FRG REP WOULD USE DATA FROM NATIONAL WHITE BOOK, ITALIAN DEP REP WOULD LIKE TO USE IISS FIGURES, AND UK REP WOULD LIKE EARLY AGREEMENT

IN NATO ON COMMON DATA, WHILE SHAPE REP ANTICIPATED DEFINITIVE FIGURES FROM DATA SUBGROUP BY 1 NOVEMBER.

3. ON BASIS OF ABOVE, WE BELIEVE THAT NEW US FIGURES ON PACT FORCES SHOULD BE CIRCULATED IN BONN AND LONDON SOON AFTER ADOPTION OF BASIC NATO PAPER TO PERMIT US TO ADVANCE THEM IN THE AD HOC GROUP SIMULTANEOUS WITH THEIR GENERAL INTRODUCTION INTO NATO. IT IS PREFERABLE THAT THIS BE DONE IN TIME TO ALLOW A FEW DAYS TIME FOR THE ALLIES TO CONSIDER THE NEW FIGURES BEFORE MAKING POSSIBLE USE OF THEM TO PRESS. MIDDLE OF WEEK OF OCTOBER 21 WOULD APPEAR LATEST DATE FOR TABLING IN AD HOC GROUP WITHOUT RISKING NERVOUS REACTION FROM ALLIES. HUMES

SECRET

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